

and stroke. However, few of us realize that obese children often have fat buildup in their livers. This can lead to cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver, and cause serious complications in adolescence or young adulthood.

The Liver Disease Research Branch at NIDDK has built a national network of researchers focusing on Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, and they have assembled a database that includes information on more than 1,500 adults and children. In addition, this network is doing a study in children that is expected to determine by next year whether sustained treatment with either metformin or vitamin E improves the liver when compared to a placebo. The results will help determine treatment options for children with Fatty Liver Disease.

This is an important disease for which NIH is doing exactly what we would hope—addressing a major health issue before it becomes a national crisis. This is yet another example of how our investment in this important agency today saves billions of dollars in future health care spending and prevents untold human suffering.

Madam Speaker, this research is one of many examples underscoring the value of our investment in biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health, and I trust that, like me, my colleagues will recognize the positive impact these advancements will have on the health of our Nation.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2419,
FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND EN-
ERGY ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today the President vetoed the Farm Bill conference report—a significant piece of legislation that is supported by the vast majority of the House of Representatives. While I am disappointed with the President's veto, I am proud to stand with so many of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle in making the Farm Bill law.

This bill, while not perfect, addresses some of the most pressing issues facing our nation today. Perhaps most importantly, this bill will provide millions of Americans with access to healthy food, especially those hit hardest by the President's failed economic policies. Nearly three-quarters of the bill's funding will promote nutrition initiatives such as increased access to food stamps, emergency food assistance programs, and a program to supply our schools with fresh fruits and vegetables as a healthy snack alternative to reduce our unacceptably high ratio of obese children.

This bill will help my home state of Colorado continue to lead the nation in developing renewable energy technologies, and will help our nation move closer to energy independence, while reducing overly generous tax credits for corn-based ethanol, and creating a better tax credit for the production of more efficient cellulosic biofuels, such as switch grass and wood chips.

The bill also ensures that farmers in Colorado and around the nation have some protections should a natural disaster befall them.

This action may foster lower future grocery prices by speeding up disaster compensation for lost crops and allowing farmers to bring new crops to market faster. Meanwhile, conservation programs included in the bill will help further protect sensitive rural fields from urban sprawl and harmful over farming, while encouraging public access to private land.

Of particular interest to Colorado, this bill includes legislation I introduced that will protect the future of Colorado's unique collection of mutual ditch companies and the precious water rights that they share for the mutual benefit of all Coloradans.

To be sure, I would have preferred this bill include tighter reforms on farm subsidies, especially when many farmers are reporting surging profits. But no compromise can be all things to all people, and while this Farm Bill is not perfect, it is good for Colorado and for our nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in overriding the President's flawed national priorities when it comes to agriculture, energy independence and ensuring that American families have food on their tables.

HONORING CONGRESSIONAL CER-
TIFICATE OF MERIT RECIPIENT
GOLI ZARCHI

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the successes and achievements of Goli Zarchi, who has received the Congressional Certificate of Merit award at McNeil High School in Austin, Texas. Goli has shown exceptional leadership qualities through her involvement in numerous activities which makes her a great candidate for this award.

Goli is involved in HOPE, a program that mentors at-risk students, Student Council, National Honor Society, National Latin Society, and the Green Club. She has also participated in many community service projects outside of school and has shown outstanding academic performance during her high school career.

I congratulate Goli Zarchi for her achievements in school and in her community and am proud to represent such talented and dedicated people in the 31st District of Texas.

WORKSITE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

HON. ZACH WAMP

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. WAMP. Madam Speaker. I rise today in support of worksite physical activity. On Wednesday, April 23rd, I had the distinct honor of opening a session on Capitol Hill that focused on the importance of worksite physical activity and how such activity benefits individuals, society, our economy and our government. There were a number of congressional offices in attendance, but the session covered such an important topic I wanted to share a bit of it with my colleagues here today.

The session, organized by the non-profit group, Partnership for Prevention, featured

speakers from the Center for Disease Control, the National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity, the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association and Erickson Communities.

The reason for the session was simple—obesity in this country is rising with nearly 67 percent of all American adults being classified as obese. Health care costs associated with diseases in which obesity is a contributing factor are rising, with costs increasing over the thirteen-year period from 1987 to 2000 by between 16 and 30 percent for such diseases as diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, cancer and heart problems. Obesity costs employers more than \$117 billion annually in sick leave, medical costs, lost productivity and labor replacement costs. And the government spends more combating these diseases through our federal medical programs.

Given how widespread and deeply disturbing this issue is, all of us have a role in combating obesity. Individuals need to exercise more. Companies need to provide more help for workplace fitness and we in government ought to both promote physical activity and eliminate any barriers that might exist that prevent that at the federal level.

The speakers addressed each of these issues, with many interesting and important facts, but the one that stuck out in my mind was a simple one. For every \$ that a company invests in a workplace fitness program, it gets back \$3.48 in reduced health care costs, lower worker absenteeism and increased productivity. That is a great return on investment. It is why so many companies have invested heavily in workplace fitness.

Sadly, we in Congress have not yet done our part. There are still too many barriers within the federal legal code to the promotion of workplace physical activity. Two pieces of legislation currently pending before the House, H.R. 1748, the Workforce Health Improvement Program Act, and H.R. 245, the Personal Health Investment Today Act, would eliminate federal tax barriers to the active promotion of physical activity. I and a number of my colleagues in the House, from both sides of the aisle, support these bills and we are working to get them enacted. Just as companies and organizations like the ones at the briefing have stepped up, I hope Congress will do the same.

IN RECOGNITION OF POPPY WEEK

HON. JOE WILSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, May 23rd through May 28th has been designated Poppy Week by the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary of South Carolina. I am grateful to have this opportunity to express my gratitude to the American Legion and to our brave servicemembers they honor this week.

The Poppy is the official flower of the American Legion. The flower symbolizes remembrance and serves as a memorial for the brave men and women of our armed forces who have given their lives in defense of this nation and our many freedoms. Since World War I, the Poppy Program has offered direct assistance to our veterans and their families.